

Joint Committee on Community Safety
April 17, 2008 Summary
Audiotape of the meeting is available at Town Clerk's Office
Minutes are available at Town Clerk's Office

1. Call to order: 7:05 pm

Present: Mitch Page, Dave Tompkins, Myra Cohen, Kris Nasinnyk, Kevin Borrup, Meg Casasanta, Tim Manke, Pam Raynock

Absent: Steve Bafundo, Dave Nagel, Jan Joseph

Also attending: Ken Freidenberg, Director of Human Services, Sgt. Jeanine Allin, Police

2. Public Participation – None

3. Report on Meeting with Town Council: Mitch Page and Kevin Borrup reported that their discussion with the Town Council on March 17 was very positive and constructive. Town Council and Board of Education members agreed. While no funding for a survey was included in the coming year's town budget, the Mayor expressed an interest in meeting again.

4. Discussion – Where we go from here: Discussion included:

- Bring in more groups including Fire Department, Ambulance, PTOs, PTAs, Youth, Highway, Faith Community, Town Planner etc.
- Continue to be a conduit for the public to give and receive feedback. This was considered one of the strongest benefits of the Committee.
- Some of the Committee recommendations are being implemented such as the new social workers and new police youth officer.
- Question was raised as to what direction the Town Council wants the Committee to take. It was expressed that there was not a lot of clarity in the Council's charge to the Committee.
- Town Council liaisons will ask the Council when they would like the Committee to return. Some members thought September would be the right time.
- Desire to have young people attend the meeting but there needs to be purpose for their involvement.
- The reason residents attended the earlier meetings was that the issues the Committee was addressing responded to their concerns. The Committee wants to get back to that format.
- Consider distributing information at the Extravaganza.
- Develop Comment Cards that can be distributed throughout the community, e-mailed to residents and placed on the town website. The question would be asked: What is your top safety concern in the Town of Newington?
- Consider writing a monthly Safety Column in the Town Crier and Newington Life.

It was decided that Mitch Page will contact the PTOs, PTAs and PACs to invite them to the May meeting. The Fire Department and/or Volunteer Ambulance would be a back up for the May

meeting. Ken Freidenberg will create the comment cards in consultation with Mitch Page and have them distributed throughout the community and placed on the website. Members are also encouraged to use their existing organizations and e-mail lists to reach out to the community using the comment card.

5. New Meadow Woods and other neighborhood updates:

- Sgt. Allin reported that police have increased patrol in the area and things are progressing.
- Clean ups continue to be planned beginning in May.
- Graffiti had increased however the Police have made some apprehensions and identified one person who caused approximately 40 incidents. A barrier has been that some residents do not want to identify individuals as they are concerned about retaliation. Education is a key issue. Sgt. Allin and Officer Webster will visit Bridgeport to check out their approach to graffiti prevention and safe expression. Fortunately none of our incidents are gang related.
- Police need digital cameras for all patrol cars. Currently they have two.
- Rotary Club donated a laptop to the Community Services Officer to make presentations for DARE and other police presentations.
- Neighborhood Watch reinstituted by Police Department.
- A draft Town Ordinance regarding penalties for the possession of tobacco products by minors was written and is currently being legally reviewed.

6. Other Business

- Mitch Page updated the group regarding Safe Routes to Schools and Walkable Newington. There was a discussion regarding state funding, carpooling, walking as exercise, traffic concerns and alternatives such as parents taking turns walking with their children rather than driving them to school.
- Mitch Page reported on a conference he attended where JoAnn Freiberg, State Department of Education Consultant discussed not using the word bullying rather using peer cruelty and the need to promote empathy and kindness.
- Ken Freidenberg gave an update on the March 27 three town Community Conversations meeting on safety with 45 people attended.

7. Public Participation – None

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28PM



Respectfully Submitted: Ken Freidenberg, Director of Human Services
Next Regular Meeting: Thursday May 15 at 7pm Helen Nelson Room